

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 104095 TOSEC 110403

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO MOSCOW, HONG KONG
FROM PEKING APRIL 29:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 770

E.O.11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, CH, UR, US, OREP (PRICE, MELVIN)

SUBJECT: CODEL PRICE VISIT PROVOKES POLICY COMMENT BY SOVIET OFFICIAL

1. IN CONNECTION WITH THE VISIT OF CODEL PRICE, SOVIET EMBASSY
POLITICAL COUNSELOR FEDETOV COMMENTED TO USLO POLCOUNS
APRIL 28 THAT: (1) CHINA WOULD NOT BE INTERESTED IN "WARNING
EQUIPMENT" FROM THE U.S., BECAUSE CHINA KNOWS
PERFECTLY WELL THE USSR HAS NO INTENTION OF ATTACKING IT;
AND (2) WERE THE US TO PROVIDE THE CHINESE WHAT THEY REALLY
WANT, E.G.MISSILE GUIDANCE EQUIPMENT, THIS ACTION WOULD
DESTROY US-SOVIET DETENTE. THE TOPICS AND REMARKS CAME
OUT OF THE BLUE, BUT FEDOTOV'S DELIVERY SUGGESTED THEY WERE
ANYTHING BUT IMPROMPTU.

2. ABOVE EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE DURING THE THIRD AND MOST
STRUCTURED OF THREE SOVIET EMBASSY ATTEMPTS IN TWO DAYS
(APRIL 27 AND 28) TO FIND OUT FROM USLO THE "REAL" PURPOSE,
CONTENT AND RESULTS OF THE CODEL PRICE VISIT. FEDOTOV, THE
MOST SENIOR SOVIET OFFICIAL INVOLVED, WAS THE ONLY ONE TO
INCLUDE COMMENT IN ADDITION TO PROBING.

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3. REALIZING THAT NOTHING WE SAID WOULD ALLAY THE SOVIETS' SUSPICIONS, AND SEEING NO PROFIT IN INTENSIFYING THESE, WE HAVE GIVEN SOVIETS MATTER-OF-FACT DESCRIPTION OF "PRIVATE" FORMAT IN WHICH CODEL VISITS TO CHINA TAKE PLACE; REVIEW OF CODEL PRICE ITINERARY (INCLUDING ITS VISIT TO 196TH INFANTRY DIVISION); AND CHARACTERIZATION OF CHINESE STATEMENTS IN FORMAL MEETINGS WITH THE CODEL AS CORRESPONDING CLOSELY TO PRC'S STANDARD PUBLIC LINE.

4. FEDOTOV WAS ARMED WITH WHAT VOA HAD BROADCAST ABOUT THE CODEL BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE VISIT; HE UNDERSTANDABLY DID NOT SEEM PERSUADED BY EXPLANATION OF VOA'S INDEPENDENCE AND OF ITS NEWS PROGRAMMING CRITERIA. THAYER UNQUOTE SISCO

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